



Board of Trustees

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March 11, 2013

E. Gordon Gee
President
The Ohio State University
190 North Oval Mall
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Dear Gordon:

As we have discussed over the past several weeks, the Board of Trustees has the very highest expectations of you as the leader of our great University and a great respect for the powerful and persuasive voice that you have throughout the higher education community. Every action that you take and every word that you speak is noticed by many and can have a profound impact on our entire University with a potential resonance across the country.

Each and every day, as a critical part of your role as President, you are called upon to serve as the University's chief spokesperson, ambassador and champion among wide-ranging sets of audiences. In fact, your ability to make a personal connection with each of these many and varied audiences is one of your greatest strengths. Your passion for the University and your sense of humor are infectious and typically serve this University very well.

However, on occasion your words that may be intended to bring a bit of levity to some significant issues have, in fact, had the opposite effect. There have been occasions on which your comments were insensitive and inappropriate and have offended others. As a result, instead of your words promoting and uniting us, they have sometimes embarrassed and divided us. As the leader of a preeminent higher education institution in the twenty-first century, those inappropriate comments, particularly about certain groups or classes of people as a whole, do not align with what we know you believe and with what we are and aspire to be as a university. Such comments are not befitting a great university like Ohio State or its leadership. The University is a place of rich diversity of thought and openness. Although we do not believe that you intended harm, such comments risk diminishing the effectiveness of our collective efforts and of your good work. Through the course of our recent discussions, we are convinced that you share our concerns and appreciate just how powerful your platform can be.

It is our mutual understanding that any comments you make or actions you take that detract from our core values and message are not productive, do not serve the University well, and are not acceptable.

Although none of us expects this to be the case, should future instances take place, they could constitute cause for even more punitive action, including dismissal, and the Board will have no choice but to take such action.

As we have spent time together discussing these issues and the importance that they have to the Board, we are comforted knowing that you appreciate the significance of our recent conversations and fully understand just how important these principles and values are to the achievement of the University's most significant goals and priorities.

To emphasize the Board's commitment to return to the core messaging of the University and its leadership, it will be important for you promptly to take the following corrective steps to reinforce our joint commitment to these University goals and priorities moving forward:

- Issuing personal apologies, as appropriate, to any group that you have offended;
- Engaging a coach with particular expertise in helping you to facilitate and foster a healthy, open, and diverse twenty-first century higher education institution with a global presence and voice;
- Seeking the assistance of professionals who could assist with revisiting your personal communications and speechwriting processes, content, and office structure, to identify additional ways to ensure more consistent messaging and statements that are better aligned with University priority goals and core values;
- Reviewing the prioritization of your time, with a particular focus on a more targeted selection of the most appropriate speaking engagements and appearances at which your presence is requested, so that there is stronger alignment between the use of your time and the core messages that you deliver in furtherance of the University's goals and priorities; and
- Using your voice to set the standards for civility, inclusion, and collective aspiration to bring people together and inspire them to reach their full potential.

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We understand that you are already making progress on many of these items and that your efforts to use your platform and position even more powerfully have not gone unnoticed. Your willingness to seek guidance and counsel on multiple levels, from a variety of sources, on how to adapt and grow is a hallmark of your leadership style and one that we value highly.

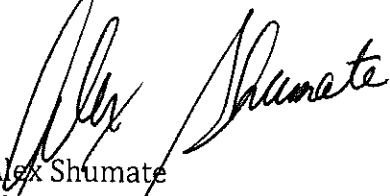
The Board of Trustees will take all of this into account in the course of its annual Presidential performance review process. Consideration of appropriate compensation changes will be included as part of that review.

On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, I thank you for your tireless devotion to this great University and for your constant vigilance and assessment and reassessment as to how the University can best continue onward from excellence to eminence.

Sincerely,



Robert H. Schottenstein
Chair, Board of Trustees



Alex Shumate
Chair, Governance Committee